

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 PA-02 SIL-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 /051 W

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FM AMCONSUL ZURICH

TO RUSDOC WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2473

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BERN

UNCLAS ZURICH 0071

BONN PASS TO USTC COLOGNE, MILAN FOR USTC, PARIS FOR USTC

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: BEXP XF XH XT SZ

SUBJ: SWISS BUYER AND AGENT REACTION TO ZURICH PROMOTIONAL  
EVENTS IN SUPPORT OF MILAN TRADE CENTER CLOTHING SHOW

REF: ZURICH 68, MILAN 2778, USDOC 694

1. AS REPORTED IN ZURICH 68, CONGEN RECENTLY  
ORGANIZED A LUNCH AND A RECEPTION IN ZURICH  
TO PROMOTE ATTENDANCE BY SWISS DEPARTMENT  
STORE BUYERS AND READY TO WEAR AGENTS AT THE  
CURRENT MILAN TRADE CENTER CLOTHING SHOW.  
THESE ARRANGEMENTS WERE MADE IN COOPERATION  
WITH EMBASSY BERN AND USTC MILAN.

2. THE TURNOUT FOR THE TWO PROMOTIONAL EVENTS  
WAS VERY GOOD, BOTH IN NUMBERS AND IN QUALITY  
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OF PARTICIPATION. HOWEVER, WE WERE DISAPPOINTED  
AT THE BUYERS' AND AGENTS' RESPONSE TO OUR  
EFFORTS. AMONG OUR GUESTS, ONLY ONE BUYER AND TWO  
AGENTS INDICATED DEFINITELY THAT THEY WOULD TRAVLL  
TO MILAN FOR THE SHOW. THESE THREE ALONE  
REPRESENT GOOD POTENTIAL SALES IN THE SWISS  
MARKET, SO WE DO NOT CONSIDER OUR EFFORTS A

FAILURE. ON THE OTHER HAND, WITH THE INTERESTED AND OPEN MINDED AUDIENCE WE HAD ATTRACTED TO BE INFORMED ABOUT THE MILAN SHOW, WE WOULD HAVE LIKED TO HAVE ACHIEVED BETTER RESULTS.

WE HAVE MADE AN EFFORT TO ASCERTAIN REASONS WHO EFFORTS TO PROMOTE ATTENDANCE AT THE TRADE CENTER SHOW WERE NOT MORE SUBSTANTIALY REWARDED. NATURALLY, INDIVIDUAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND REACTION VARIED AMONG THE PARTICIPANTS. THE FOLLOWING GENERALIZATIONS REPRESENT A FAIR SAMPLE OF EXPLANATORY COMMENT BY OUR GUESTS:

A) THE TIMING OF THE MILAN SHOW CONFLICTS WITH ISPO, EUROPE'S LARGEST SPORTSWEAR EXHIBIT, BEING HELD IN MUNICH IN FEB 24-27.

B) EUROPEAN BUYERS ARE ACCUSTOMED TO MAKING THEIR PURCHASE DECISIONS AT MAJOR FASHION FAIRS (SUCH AS IGEDO, DUSSELDORF; MODEWOCHE, MUNICH; DURCHREISE, BERLIN) OR AT OTHER SMALLER MORE SPECIALIZED EXHIBITIONS HELD THROUGHOUT EUROPE WHERE PRODUCTS FROM A LARGE SELECTION OF PRODUCERS ARE AVAILABLE;

C) BUYERS BELIEVE THAT EUROPEAN CONSUMERS ARE STILL RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT THE WIDESPREAD USE OF SYNTHETIC FIBERS IN CLOTHING AND PREFER WOOL AND COTTON FABIRCS WHICH UNCLASSIFIED

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ALLEGEDLY BREATHE MORE FREELY EXPECIALLY IN WARM WEATHER.

D) THERE IS A TIME-PHASE PROBLEM BETWEEN THE PRODUCTION/PURCHASING SCHEDULES OF THE U S MANUFACTURERS AND EUROPEAN BUYERS. CONSEQUENTLY, THE SWISS RETAILER HAS ALREADY COMMITTED HIS SUMMER WEAR BUDGET AND IS ALREADY LOOKING AHEAD TO FALL AND WINTER REQUIREMENTS BY THE TIME THE U S SPRING AND SUMMER COLLECTIONS ARE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION.

E) SWISS BUYERS ARE CONCERNED THAT THEIR RELATIVELY SMALL ORDERS WOULD BE SO MARGINAL TO U S MANUFACTURERS THAT PRODUCERS WOULD NOT REALLY BE INTERESTED - AND IF PROBLEMS OR BOTTLENECKS SHOULD OCCUR, THE SMALL FOREIGN CUSTOMER MIGHT BE VULNERABLE.

F) BUYERS FELT THAT THE SMALL COLLECTION OF SAMPLE ITEMS BROUGHT FROM MILAN FOR DISPLAY AT THE ZURICH EVENTS WAS NOT VERY SUITABLE TO SWISS TASTES. THOUGH IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT THE ITEMS WERE NOT MEANT TO BE A COMPREHENSIVE CROSS-SECTION SAMPLE, THE PRODUCTS SHOWN WERE UNFORTUNATELY NOT VERY WELL RECEIVED.

4. CONCLUSION: THE REACTION OF POTENTIAL BUYERS IN THIS AREA IS OBVIOUSLY THE ONLY MARGINAL IMPORTANCE TO THE SUCCESS OF THE MILAN SHOW OR TO THE LARGER OBJECTIVE OF INCREASING EXPORTS OF AMERICAN READY-TO-WEAR CLOTHING TO EUROPEAN MARKETS. WE ARE SUBMITTING THESE COMMENTS SO THAT THEY CAN BE EVALUATED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE BIGGER PICTURE WHICH WILL EMERGE

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FROM THE TRADE CENTER SHOW ITSELF. FOR WHAT IT IS WORTH WE WOULD LIKE TO ADD THE FOLLOWING IMPRESSIONS:

A. COMMENTS IN PARA 3 NOTWITHSTANDING, WE BELIEVE THERE IS A GOOD POTENTIAL MARKET FOR U S MANUFACTURED READY TO WEAR IN SWITZ AND THAT SWISS BUYERS AND CONSUMERS ARE OPEN MINDED, EVEN FAVORABLY DISPOSED TO THE US AS A SOURCE OF SUPPLY.

B. EXHIBITORS AT MILAN AND OTHER PRODUCERS HOPING TO SELL IN EUROPE SHOULD BE MADE AWARE OF SOME OF THE RESERVATIONS EXPRESSED BY POTENTIAL SWISS CUSTOMERS AND BE PREPARED TO ANSWER THEM IN THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH POTENTIAL EUROPEAN CUSTOMERS.

C. COMMERCE MIGHT AGAIN CONSIDER PUTTING TOGETHER A US EXHIBIT AT MODEWOCHE OR IGEDO EITHER AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE FAIR OR AS AN INDEPENDENT EFFORT HELD IN MUNICH OR DUSSELDORF CONCURRENTLY WITH THE MAIN EXHIBIT. IF AN OFFICIAL U S EXHIBIT IS NOT FEASIBLE OR DESIRABLE, INDIVIDUAL PRODUCERS MIGHT BE ENCOURAGED TO EXHIBIT IN THE CONTEXT OF THOSE TRADE FAIRS.

5. WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING A COPY OR SUMMARY OF THE FINAL REPORT OF THE MILAN SHOW. NELSON

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